

Tips For Checking I.D.

It's not always easy to tell if someone is legally old enough to purchase tobacco products and alcoholic beverages. That's why it is important to always ask for an I.D. and check it carefully.

These guidelines can help you verify the authenticity of a driver's license.

What to Look for:

- The card's expiration date. Do not accept the license if the date is expired.
- The word "duplicate" on the front of the card. Someone else may have the original card.
- Glue lines or bumpy surfaces by the picture or birth date. Uneven surfaces often indicate tampering.
- Consistency of numbers. The typeset for the birth date should match the lettering used on the rest of the license.
- Use a black light, flashlight or magnifying glass for close inspection of security features such as ultraviolet printing or micro printing.
- The state logo. A state seal or logo that is partially missing or appears altered is another clue to a fake card.
- Pin holes on the surface. Bleach may have been inserted to "white out" certain aspects of a date.
- The card's reverse-side lettering. While the front may appear flawless, often counterfeiters merely photocopy the reverse side. Look for blurred lettering.
- Size, color, lettering, thickness and corners. Compare the questionable I.D. against a known "standard" – your own valid driver's license.
- Someone else's card. Make sure the photo, height and weight on the card match the person in front of you.
- If it is an out-of-state license, or for any reason looks unfamiliar to you, use an I.D. checking guide. This is especially important in college and tourist communities.

What to ask if you spot any one of these problems:

- Ask for a second piece of I.D. People with fake I.D.'s rarely carry back-up identification.
- Quiz the cardholder about basic information on the card, such as birth date, middle initial, zip code, etc.

Bottom Line:

If you are not absolutely convinced that the card is authentic, do not serve the customer.